

New Skills for Youth

WISCONSIN

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Wisconsin was one of 10 states selected to participate in New Skills for Youth (NSFY), an initiative enhancing state efforts to increase the number of learners across the country who are prepared for success in both college and career. Between 2016 and 2019, Wisconsin strengthened its career readiness system through NSFY by:

Designing and launching Pathways Wisconsin

Pathways Wisconsin is supported by regional coordinators who work with employers, K-12 and postsecondary leaders and other key stakeholders to develop career pathways that are approved at the state level. Wisconsin piloted the program in four regions — Indianhead, Milwaukee, Madison and Moraine Park — with the intention of developing a proof of concept and scaling the model statewide. Since 2016, Pathways Wisconsin has designed and rolled out state-endorsed regional career pathways in four critical industries — nursing, construction, manufacturing and information technology. To raise awareness about these opportunities, Pathways Wisconsin was integrated into the state's Academic and Career Planning (ACP) policy, which was rolled out statewide in the 2017-18 school year. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) created six professional development modules to help school district partners understand how Pathways Wisconsin connects to ACP and how to support equity in career pathways.



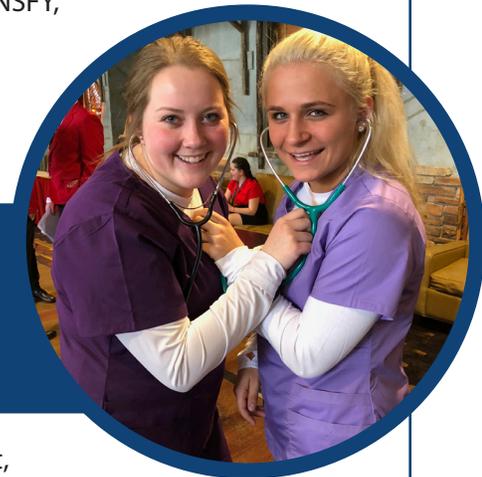
“ [Pathways Wisconsin] allows students to ... learn more and do what they enjoy now and learn on the job. ... I'm glad I get this experience before I go to college, before I make a decision about what I want to go into. ”

— Dave Patel, Student,
Indian Trail High School and
Medical Sciences Academy



Engaging employers to strengthen regional career pathways

Employer engagement has been key to Wisconsin's career readiness strategy from the beginning. While the state originally planned to identify CEO champions to lead in each region, state leaders soon recognized that a better strategy would be to engage existing networks of employers through the regional economic development organizations. This collaboration has helped catalyze local employer support for regional career pathways and work-based learning opportunities. Since the beginning of NSFY, Wisconsin has involved more than 200 regional employer partners in the development of Wisconsin career pathways.



Enhancing the state data system with Career Technical Education (CTE) data and career readiness indicators

To improve data quality and alignment, DPI integrated CTE data collection into the state's WISEdata student information system. Previously, CTE data were collected manually in Excel spreadsheets. DPI trained local school and district administrators on the new system to ensure more accurate and high-quality data collection. Additionally, Wisconsin began collecting data on students who participate in youth apprenticeships or earn industry-recognized credentials and reporting this information on the state high school report card.

MAJOR STATE POLICY WINS

Assembly Bill (A.B.) 64 (2017) [↗](#)

Wisconsin's biennial budget amended the state accountability system to include measures of career readiness such as participation in youth apprenticeships and attainment of industry-recognized credentials. The budget also increased funding for CTE incentive grants to help students earn credentials.

A.B. 745 (2018) [↗](#)

This law enabled a high school student to begin the first year of an apprenticeship during his or her final year of high school if the school district certifies that the student is on track to graduate and that the proposed training schedule will not delay the student's completion of graduation requirements.

Wisconsin NSFY Impact *by the Numbers*

100+

Number of school districts that have received training on connecting Pathways Wisconsin to ACP

210

Number of regional employers that supported career pathways development

63

Number of school districts offering regional career pathways

5,232

Number of company work-based learning activities offered across the state





Sustainability Strategy



The Wisconsin Center for Education Research is conducting a study of the Pathways Wisconsin pilot program to evaluate the impact of the model and identify effective practices that can be scaled statewide. The Wisconsin NSFY team plans to use the evaluation to build momentum for the model and secure state funding in the FY 2021-22 budget. Additionally, as a result of the work undertaken through NSFY, state-endorsed regional career pathways now serve as the model for quality career pathway implementation in Wisconsin. This model will serve as the foundation for how Wisconsin holds recipients accountable for implementing high-quality CTE programs through the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V).

Wisconsin NSFY Local Impact: Fond du Lac High School and Architecture, Construction and Engineering Academy

In 2019, Fond du Lac High School opened the doors to a brand-new facility designed to prepare learners for careers in construction, a high-need industry in Fond du Lac, WI. Although Fond du Lac had previously run a construction program out of the high school, the space was small, and enrollment was low. Local business leaders and school administrators recognized the need to more directly connect learning opportunities with careers in the industry and opened the Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) Academy in 2019 to help make that connection. Since the program opened, enrollment in architecture, construction and engineering courses at Fond du Lac High School has more than doubled, from 62 students in the 2018-19 academic year to 128 the following year. The ACE Academy is part of efforts to build and expand high-quality career pathways in the Moraine Park region through Pathways Wisconsin.

ABOUT NSFY

NSFY is a \$75 million national initiative developed by JPMorgan Chase & Co. As part of this initiative, the Council of Chief State School Officers, Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group worked with states to improve their career readiness systems. NSFY consisted of two phases. During Phase One (March-October 2016), states conducted a comprehensive needs assessment and developed action plans to examine and transform their career readiness systems and expand the opportunities available to learners. During Phase Two (January 2017-December 2019), states executed their three-year plans to transform their career readiness systems.